



ENERGY STAR[®] for Your Home and Office

U.S. ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY ♦ U.S. DEPARTMENT OF ENERGY

Backgrounder ENERGY STAR[®] Saving the Earth. Saving Your Money.

Efficient energy use and a healthy environment go hand in hand. Inefficient appliances and other products waste energy, which in turn, inflates utility bills and adds to air pollution. Most of the energy consumed in homes and offices is produced by burning fossil fuels like coal, oil, and natural gas. Pollution from these fuel sources can cause respiratory disease, smog, acid rain, and global climate change. In an effort to lessen the harmful side-effects of producing and consuming energy, the U.S. Department of Energy (DOE) and the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) are working together to help consumers make energy-efficient purchasing decisions. The ENERGY STAR label, the symbol for energy efficiency, can help purchasers identify products that save energy, save money, and protect the environment.

In 1992, EPA and DOE began forging partnerships with manufacturers, retailers, utilities, businesses, and institutions to promote the labeling of energy-efficient technologies. ENERGY STAR manufacturing partners voluntarily join this effort by agreeing to label products that meet stringent efficiency criteria set by EPA and DOE. Many new products have been added to the list of labeled products. Now TVs and VCRs, computers, office equipment, appliances, heating and cooling equipment, home lamps and lighting fixtures, and even new homes can bear the ENERGY STAR label.

The potential for achieving energy bill savings and air pollution reduction through efficient energy use is substantial. Over a 15 year period, if people chose to invest in ENERGY STAR-labeled products instead of standard new equipment, these products could save consumers and businesses nearly \$100 billion on energy bills. In addition to these dollar savings, those purchases could achieve a reduction of greenhouse gas emissions equivalent to removing 17 million cars each of those years. The actual impact on energy bills and pollution is likely to be even greater because in many cases, this equipment will replace older equipment that is both more polluting and more expensive to operate.

For an individual household the economic and environmental benefits can be equally dramatic. The typical U.S. household spends about \$1,300 on its home energy bill. Purchasing ENERGY STAR-labeled appliances, home electronics, home office equipment, and heating and cooling equipment can reduce that energy bill by about 30 percent—a potential savings of nearly \$400 dollars a year. In the United States, the greenhouse gas emissions from an average home are greater than from an average car. Buying ENERGY STAR-labeled appliances, home electronics, home office equipment and heating and cooling equipment, instead of standard new equipment can achieve a pollution savings equivalent to taking a car off the road for seven years.

Consumers can get additional information about ENERGY STAR-labeled products and programs by calling the toll-free ENERGY STAR hotline at 1-888-STAR-YES (1-888-782-7937). ENERGY STAR information is also available on the World Wide Web at www.energystar.gov

For More Information:

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